M 303 285 sides of this square and held in place by a binding of twisted raffia fibers. The sides are then plaited by the simplest method, that is, with the horizontal band weaving in and out of the vertical thongs. As all of these molds always have approximately the same height and diameter, the ngula cones are both similar in M 303 shape and quite constant in weight. The natives use them a great deal as trade goods. In some regions the ngula cone has become [436] a veritable currency, with a standard value from one tribe to another. [170] A market is organized regularly when steamers M [439] call at Mushie, and there the people of the interior exchange the products of their industries for the imported objects brought by the Blacks who work for the Whites. Ngula cones are among the principal items of trade and bring a very high price. In the Oshwe region, the old chief Kua Kua was a great ngula trader. He came by regularly with four or five of his wives, bringing various products from the region between the Kasai and the Lukenie to exchange for the ngula made in the Lokoro region.

D 303 Throughout the central Congo regions, the ngula used for trade has the shape of an elongated truncated cone. Among the Basongo-Meno and farther east, on the other hand, ngula most often is shaped in a ball. The native of these regions often uses it to decorate his pottery and wooden objects and to dye the fibers of cloth used for decoration. He keeps it in cosmetic boxes carved from takula wood and usually decorated with very artistic designs. He also uses it to color his hair. [Ed., a passage from the middle of page 170 to the last paragraph, page 171, is omitted.]

M 302 ●789 [171] Aside from ngula, the native sometimes smears his body with a type of white clay quite frequently found in the river beds. [172] The native calls it mpembe. Its use is far from being as widespread as that of ngula, and we believe that the native associates it with magic power rather than ornamentation. Mpembe is used chiefly by the peoples of the Congo-Kasai, Lake Leopold II, and Lukenie regions, up to the region of the Batitu.

M [765] We never saw a native smear his whole body with it. The few women in mourning that we saw were covered with a grayish-yellow mud and not with mpembe. We believe, moreover, that the use of mpembe is reserved to the chief, his wives, and perhaps

M 302 dignitaries and their families, but it was impossible for us to prove the accuracy of our hypothesis. When questioned about this, the natives always confined themselves to uncertain and evasive replies. The native chief rarely appears at a large gathering without having his face and sometimes his arms and chest covered with lines drawn with mpembe. At all official receptions, the chief, a few dignitaries, and sometimes some of the chiefs' wives had a more or less symmetrical rectangle drawn with mpembe around the eyes.

M 304 362 We observed the following artificial deformations in the course of our journey:

1) depilation;
2) filing of the teeth;
3) tattooing by incision;
4) circumcision.

M 302 Depilation is practiced by all the peoples of the regions visited. The native plucks out every last hair on his body. Where the hair cannot be plucked, it is shaved with great care. For the parts of the body that are hard to reach, men and women help one another. Eyebrows and eyelashes are both plucked, while beards and mustaches, on the other hand, are cared for with great pride. It is very unusual to see a full beard. We ran across only one such case. The happy possessor of this beautiful [173] beard was as proud of it as he could be, and Natali, chief of the Banfumu of Kwamouth, was heartbroken to have only a few hairs on his chin while one of his dignitaries was endowed with such a fine beard.

T 302 Among the Bateke-Banfumu peoples, up to the Ipanga, the natives frequently shave the base of their scalp all around the head. Their headdress looks like a very symmetrical calotte.

M 302 Among the Yaelima we encountered men whose heads were completely shaved except for one strip just above the nape of the neck. A similar custom must have prevailed among the Bateke and Banfumu, but the unshaved part was broader.

Among the Yaelima and up to the region of the Bankutshu north of Bena Dibele, the natives shave their hair in such a way

575 x The bomɓtsa takes her task to heart, for her husband's glory is her own as well. The bomɓtsa is conscious of her role in spite of the presence of a favorite, for it is less that of a wife in the sexual sense of the word than of a wife who is mother of the family. It is of a higher order than the roles of the other wives; it is more serious, more unselfish, and based on a deeper love and a more deliberate will. According to the native point of view, it is rightly the source of a legitimate pride; it is an honor, while the position of the favorite is closer to an object of vanity. Therefore the bomɓtsa likes to show her importance.

It may seem strange to us that the bomɓtsa puts her heart into working to increase the number of women in the harem. But this is altogether natural for the Nkundó. The growth of the harem is a source of glory, and she has been brought up to this attitude since her youth. After the first ardor, her affection becomes more serious. She becomes a perfect matron in the Roman manner. Although she continues her relations with her husband and takes care of her children, she is chiefly occupied with her duties as mistress of the whole family. Her husband loves her with a deeper and more reasoned emotion than he shows toward his other wives. Without cease he shows his consideration and attachment for her. If she is sterile it is very likely that he will give her a child belonging to his family or born of a wife who has left him, so that she can bring it up as if it were her own. [343]

575x 582 The bomɓtsa's house is located at the right end of the row of wive's huts. She deserves this location because of her function as bomóngó lofnjé, "owner, mistress of the polygamist's compound. The Nkundó say: ɓɓéla lofnjé, "she stretches, or extends, her husband's group of dwellings in order to enlarge it."

575x A polygamous husband undertakes nothing of importance without first consulting the bomɓtsa (be it the creation of a bolímbé or a nkúndé, or the acquisition of new wives, etc.). He respects her and treats her with deference, as if she were his mother, our people say.

[719] The bomɓtsa is the only one of all the polygamist's wives who plays a part in the acceptance of the Nkundó offensive and defensive

595x magic known as yoli. She alone participates in the ceremonies
789 that accompany it; with her husband she eats half of the hen that has been killed for that purpose, and on that night she alone may share his bed. Finally, only with her, to the exclusion of the co-wives, may the husband eat the fish called wengɛ, and only she may and must burn the leavings. Otherwise the magical practice would turn against its owner.

595x When a piece of game is divided, the bomátsa is entitled
[774] to the lintúla (the lower portion of the breast), which would go to the man's mother (or his father's or his elder brother's wife) were he a bachelor.

In the bomátsa's absence, her place is taken by her ebísa (see below, Article IV) or by the wife who follows her in seniority. At her death, the same rules govern her succession.

The name bomátsa is probably derived from the root mátsa, "to begin." She is the one who founds the family. Sometimes she is also called ikókóyónjemba, literally "bachelor's love." The Bombwanja say itókóyónjemba (the Ekonda, nkímukolo).

In addition to the bomátsa, reference is sometimes made to
[344] bomátsa w'ísíli, or "bomátsa of the left." The bomátsa in the strict sense of the term is contrasted to the latter as bomátsa w'ílóme ("of the right"). The bomátsa of the left is a polygamist's second
[592] wife. She is given this name because her house is at the left end of the lotánja. She has no special rights or duties, however, unless the actual bomátsa delegates to her the task of looking after her end of the compound. If the harem is large, the husband may set aside
[224] for her a special portion of the game, called itómbantúta, or nape of the neck. In her absence it goes to the eldest daughter.

Article II. The Favorite

595λ All polygamists of any importance have a favorite wife, or
nkóndɛ. But only the rich and the notables have a true nkóndɛ.
556 The minor polygamists, of course, imitate the others (nkóndɛ ɛ̂ɛ̂ wedíf or ɛ̂ɛ̂ itsíó, "without great importance"), but they do so without

Article VI

Magic Practices Pertaining to Divorce

586X
●789 It seems to me not without interest to devote a few lines to the magic practices prevalent among our peoples and used on the occasion of divorce. We are not speaking of love philters; strictly speaking they would not be appropriate here. (1) We will therefore

1. See Chapter I, Part 2, Article VIII.

limit ourselves to giving a general idea of the practices used to prevent a wife from leaving her husband, to avenge a divorce, or to make a fugitive return.

As we shall see, these objectives often become intertwined.

1) The trinity ikétáki-itóko-ntómbá is considered by the natives as three related practices. We see it more as three forms of a single practice.

[177] All three originated with the Ntómbá of Lake Tumba and were introduced to the Nkundó -- directly or indirectly -- by certain Ekonda tribes living between the two peoples. This introduction took place in modern times. The practices were unknown here before colonization. Even at the present time they have not spread everywhere; they have not yet crossed the Momboyo. The chronological order of their introduction is first ikétáki, second itóko, third ntómbá.

The animating spirit of these practices is the leopard. Their primary purpose is to call back an unfaithful wife and, if she obstinately refuses, to kill her or her seducer. Secondarily, they also serve to cause the death of any enemy whatever, especially in reprisal.

The three practices differ with respect to their manufacture and method of use. We cannot go into all the relevant details, for they are outside the framework of this study. [416] It is sufficient to say that the owner of the charm to whose powers he resorts first calls the woman by blowing into an antelope horn,

especially very early in the morning at the crowing of the cock. (1)

1. The natives also use this means to call their children who long ago left for the "lowlands" and whose return they ardently desire.

If the one who is called does not return, the charm will take revenge either on her or on her lover, depending on the desire of the person operating it. Another intervention on his part is then required, however, and it varies according to the form used. Note that according to the native view it is impossible for the wife not to hear the call, no matter how far away she may be. If she does not return, it is because she is being obstinate and deserves to be punished.

The spirit of vengeance alone is involved in:

2) The ngondé. This charm comes from the Coquilhatville region or even further away. The word ngondé is the Lolíngá form of the Lonkundó word nkondé, which means "gavial." The teeth of this reptile actually play a part in its composition. It is used to punish any thief by death. Therefore it has been declared effective against anyone who tries to seduce the wife of another. It will cause the culprit's feet to swell and to open with pus. Like the above practices, this one has not yet crossed Momboyo.

Such usages like many others have therefore been recently introduced. Before the arrival of Europeans in these parts, only love philters were known. However, it is easily understandable that the Nkundó gladly and confidently received these new practices which are so useful -- in their opinion -- and operate in a domain of capital importance for which colonization has deprived them of their ancient sanctions and means of prevention. [417]

846 of a dried banana leaf. Three knots are tied in it. The helper holds it in one hand and with the other cuts off the first knot, which she carries away with her. The mother keeps her end in her hand and presents the other to her husband. She receives the knife from the hands of the helper and cuts between the two knots so that each spouse carries away his end. Each time the parties involved say, "We have cut the bofofó; we are separating; go away." Having thus bid each other farewell, each fastens his end to the roof of the seclusion hut.

This ceremony ends the period of seclusion and puts an end
846 to the ekelé prohibitions. From then on the couple may have sexual
837 relations together, the helper can resume her usual life, and adultery on the part of the father can no longer harm the child or the mother. Note, however, that the child's immunity to the father's misconduct implies one condition: the father must not take it on his knees the day he commits adultery. By the following day the effects of his act have been nullified. A woman can discover her husband's infidelity through his refusal to take the child. Often she makes use of this means to obtain a confirmation of her suspicions. Some men abstain from all misconduct solely to guard against any such possibility. Adultery may have a harmful influence on the child even after it is weaned if it has a weak constitution. [491] All this seems to indicate that the reaction is considered to be physical and direct rather than a sanction based on religion or superstition.

846 Nkundó therapeutics include an antidote, however; it is
●789 called bondandota (from ndota "an illness caused by the infraction of prohibitions of a sexual nature"). It consists of a potion made
[278] from the sap of an aroid bearing the same name, which is mixed with the sap of the libúlúkakó plant. If for some reason or other the couple have been away from each other for a fairly long time, they sit or stand face to face and take the child on their knees, which touch each other, and each one makes the child drink the potion twice, once from each hand, making sure to turn its face toward him [or her]. Usually the couple also drink some of the brew, though it is intended primarily for the child. Without these precautions the relations between the pair and the father's

taking the child would cause the child's death. The same precaution is also in order if the husband goes on a trip before the child's birth and does not return till after the delivery

We have just seen that the harmful effects of the father's misconduct on his child's life is effectuated through the father's act of taking the child on his knees. Thus the Nkundó speak of baóngó b'ábé, "a father's bad knees," to indicate his reprehensible conduct, and they say that the bondandota potion is administered to the child so that it will not die because of the father's bad knees. (1)

1. The expression baóngó b'ábé is also used when an undertaking which requires continence is unsuccessful. (See Article II, 3).

When a child has painful and persistent diarrhea, it is often interpreted as the effect of the father's infidelity. As soon as they become aware of it, the couple separate for some time, and the father no longer touches the child. [492]

Contrary to what one reads on this subject about other peoples of the Congo, Nkundó couples do not have to remain continent beyond the period of seclusion. The separation ceremony gives the husband back the freedom of action he had before his wife's pregnancy. For the wife the bokeka remains strict with respect to illicit relations until the child is weaned However she, too, may regain her freedom by having recourse to an antidote, the ingredients of which she purchases from a person who holds the secret. The ingredients are placed in a small antelope horn which is then stopped up by means of bolaká (resin from the Symphonia gabonensis). The interested party wears it about her loins on a string or a bead belt or, preferably, on a special creeper. This amulet protects the child's life from the harmful influence of the mother's acts of adultery, but it does so only on condition that she does not separate herself from the child, as we will explain further on. This procedure

837 is not morally condoned, and a woman who resorts to it does not
834 escape criticism. She is compared to a goat, who does not have
789 a regular and steady husband: álǒmya bǒna lontaa, "she nurses her child as a goat does." (1)

1. The opposite of lǒmya lontaa, -- if it is used to show the contrast -- is lǒmya lontómbá.

When the separation ceremony is ended, the mother is
846 adorned with all her ornaments and goes out to walk in a procession through the village. The child is carried by an older sister, a niece, etc. He is taken around the village, bánangya bǒna l'olóló Small presents are offered him everywhere -- an arrow, a small knife, a hairpin, etc There is no feast, however; if that honor were accorded him he would die of it (for when someone dies, there is always a feast of farewell in his honor). [493]

Article IV. Nursing

853 During the first few days after birth an infant does not suck the milk of its mother, since it is "too hot." He is fed by a third person, preferably a relative.

On the third day the following occurs:

953 1) The mother's breasts are massaged (-kulola baéle). For
757 this purpose the Nkundó use leaves of the bǔte creeper and the lilongyá plant (Adenostemma viscosum Forst.), a green leaf from a banana tree called nselenge, several pieces of peeled sugar cane, the tips of the dried leaves of any banana tree, and sometimes other plants are added as well. All the ingredients are crushed, then boiled, and white sand and a bit of red paint are mixed in with them. The mixture is called ndengó. It is prepared by the women who are in charge of massaging the breasts. The bǔte leaves, however, must be picked by the father. He goes to the forest early in the morning and first shakes the creeper so that all leaves that are not firmly attached will fall off. Then he climbs it and picks the desired

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845 from the others. They thus rank with the great notables of the past. [sic]

845 When the children grow up and become self-sufficient, all
554 the special regulations lose their force and they become like everybody else. Nothing distinguishes them from the rest in marriage, death, etc. No preference is shown for or against them. But their descendants will again produce twins.

Thus the Nkundó consider twins as extraordinary children,
845 but they do not carry this view to extremes. They are pleased to receive two children at a time, although they believe that under such circumstances the pregnancy and delivery are more dangerous for the mother. That is why she is called boyéngwá since, despite the seriousness of the situation, she did not die. This epithet is also applied to the father and to the twins, probably for the same reason as well as because of their immunity with respect to prohibitions. If the twins are of different sexes, however, the mother is not as likely to be called boyéngwá, since she is likoka, "harmful." (1)

1. See above, Article II, 3.

945 It is apparent from the above description that twins are
●789 considered to be somewhat tainted with magic. The existence of
754 this belief is confirmed by the prohibition against throwing anything (stone, palm kernel, etc.) onto their hut, the same prohibition applying to anyone who possesses a charm or practices sorcery or protective magic. In addition they possess a certain innate ability to cast a spell over the activities (hunting, fishing) of others. That is why persons who are afraid of being harmed by them smear themselves with kaolin in the same way as do such children and their parents. [505]

The Nkundó have had cases of triplets, but they are ex-
845 tremely rare. The youngest of the three is called Yɛ́ndembe, or Yɛ́ndende, or Yɛ́lele. The only special practice with reference to the youngest one is that he can never be ordered to do any work, be sent to carry a message, run any errand, etc., áfótswé ntómo.

326 The objects of iron made by the Mongo smith are as follows.
411

Bibui: all that is of iron

1. Likula: arrow.
2. Bosuki: arrow for hunting pigs; also used to cut copal and spear fish.
3. Bongelo: lance.
4. Ifombolo: lance.
5. Mpokwankoi: lance.
6. Liswa: axe.

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Jokula: knives

1. Mombi; 2. Boli; 3. Bolengwa; 4. Lingonda; 5. Limenga; 6. Likodzi; 7. Efamba; 8. Momba; 9. More little knives; 10. Lizangi.

Basongo: needles

1. Ingwala.
[413] 2. Lokili: tattooing needle.
3. Jyolo: small needle to get flea beetles out of the feet.
4. Efoli: small pin.

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[789]

Ngonga: bells

1. Ngonga ea tosisi: bells worn on the hips by women and children so that as they walk the ringing will keep away the evil spirits.
2. Bongonga: a bell attached to the point of a war-lance which makes it like the head of a walking-stick but upside down.
3. Lingwete: little round bell worn on the wrist by men.
4. Elondza ea itumba: the war-bell. An oblong pipe [97] in the form of a long cup attached to a stick. It is struck with a piece of soft wood, and the sound travels surprisingly far.

These bells are all made of wrought iron.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

624 and that he may have no more than a month or perhaps a year in which to live and will surely die speedily.

The special objects attaching to the office of *nkumu*, among these the hat, *montolo*, and stool, *mbata*, are at the same time subject to similar magical arts to determine whether they may be produced for the new *nkumu*'s use. They are not present, being in the possession of the *molembe* which will appoint him, but are mentioned by name. Apart from the *montolo*, no further ceremony is required to identify these objects with their future owner.

[300] The *mingo* ended, the *Nkema Akuke* smears black *mbili* all over his body again,
624 before the rites begin to determine which of his wives is to be known as *Nsono*,
787 the one who will be closest to her husband throughout his days. For this, magic formulae (*benzako*, sing. *enzako*) are used. All the wives sit round in a circle and the *nkanga* places some irritant such as ground pepper in the eyes of all the women. The wife whose eyes stream most and whose discomfort is also accompanied by a violent [827] shaking of the body is known to be *Nsono*. Here again, lying is believed to be out of the question, for the shaking of the body is something that is supposed to be impossible of simulation, the real being easily distinguished by all from the false. *Nsono* is now stripped of all clothing and her body smeared by the *nkanga* with yellow clay on one side, and with white on the other. A belt of leaves is put round her waist
624 and a small bit of cloth between the legs with each end attached to the belt. Near by
789 a gourd with 'medicine' in it has been standing ready for the next step in the ceremonies, and this is now smeared with white clay, a parrot's feather stuck in the neck, and handed to *Nsono*, who receives it in one hand. Into the other hand is put a section of plantain stalk, into one end of which has been stuck a parrot's feather. A third feather is placed in her mouth so that she cannot speak, greet anyone, or eat. She is now tied with a cord which is held by one of the young men attending *Nkema Akuke*. At this point of the procedure the *nkanga* states his price [781] for his work, which will be in the neighbourhood of one hundred brass rods, worth
435 to-day about fifty francs, but formerly double that amount. The future *nkumu*, accompanied as before, leaves for the village of the *molembe*. *Nsono* starts off at a tremendous pace, for she is now imbued with a sort of frenzied strength, and for this reason has been tied up and put in charge of a strong young man, otherwise she would be off so fast that no one could catch her, and would go into the forest, where she would live for days unseen.

624 In the village of the *molembe* the party all sit in an *ebanga* belonging to one of the elders. This is the place where the Tumba men really live—their houses are just [343] sleeping and cooking establishments, but the *ebanga*, having a roof for shade and no
342 walls, is the place where the men congregate and spend their leisure time. It is also the site of the village smithy, which takes up one end. Here, then, *Nkema Akuke* and his party sit for a day and a night, and neither he nor *Nsono* may eat food or drink [862] wine during this period. Games are played by the *molembe*—mock battles, dances, and [517] songs chiefly of battle, and before the first streaks of dawn appear the group in the *ebanga* begins to march up and down the village singing.

At dawn the whole party, accompanied by a large crowd, make their way to a place in the bush where there is an elevation of some sort. Here *Nkema Akuke* climbs up and takes his stand, accompanied by *Nsono*. Now the *molembe* choose the *Bilepo*